

Washington, D.C. - Today Congresswoman Melissa Bean (IL-08) announced that the House will vote later this week on legislation that includes funding that she requested in H.R. 2829, *The Financial Services and General Government Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriations Act*. The bill, which the House will vote on later this week, includes \$231,000 in federal funding that Bean requested to support the Illinois Institute of Technology's Innovating Manufacturing Education Project.

The Illinois Institute of Technology, in partnership with Argonne National Laboratory and the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce Foundation, launched the Innovating Manufacturing Education Project initiative to create and disseminate improved models for innovation among small and medium sized manufacturers.

IIT's *Innovating Manufacturing Education Project* will enhance manufacturers' ability to develop a highly-trained workforce and utilize emerging technologies to find and exploit new market opportunities. This important Illinois-based initiative concentrates on the competitiveness of our nation's small and medium-sized businesses, which are the driving force of innovative ideas, new product development and economic growth.

Funding for this project will help create curricula for innovation research and education of the next generation of U.S. engineers, scientists and industrial managers working in manufacturing. It will develop innovative research and development demonstration projects with small and medium-sized manufacturers that address issues of sustainability in both products and processes. Finally, this project will identify and document new ways for research institutions to collaborate more effectively and efficiently with small and medium-sized manufacturing firms.

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